# UNITY

*FREEDOM, FELLOWSHIP AND CHARACTER IN RELIGION*


Ralph Waldo Emerson and the Civilizing of Religion - - - *R. Lester Mondale*

Our Age of Unreason—And After - - - - - - *Victor S. Yarros*

Exiles of the Spirit - - *Joseph Remenyi*

Germán Arciniegas: Colombian Author - - - - - - *John H. Hershey*

Trumpets on New Horizons
*Edited by Lucia Trent*



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## The Field

### Shadows Are Colored

All of us know people who have succumbed to the shadows that entered their lives. They have taken some experience of disappointment or frustration, colored it with their fears, their hatreds, or their selfishness and allowed it to make them unhappy and disillusioned. For every event of the past—every experience in the present—every anticipation for the future—casts a shadow, i.e., has an effect upon our lives. The nature of that effect, be it good or bad, is largely colored or determined by our attitude toward those events, experiences and anticipations.

If we allow the past to warp our judgments, if we shirk our duties or seek to escape our responsibilities in the present, if we are apprehensive and fearful of the future, we deny ourselves all creativity and become pawns of futility without purpose or dignity.

Today a great and destructive war casts it shadow upon us all. It has brought tragedy and sadness into many of our homes. It is not yet over—indeed its shadow is spreading and deepening. It affects us not only as individuals but as a nation. Our very future as a people is at stake. Much of that future will be determined after the victory is ours, after the fighting is done.

The happiness and progress of many generations will be determined by the way in which we as a people color its long dark shadow—by the attitudes and reactions we have to its tragic destruction.

If we allow our hatred and fear to grow and warp our judgments—if we allow new greeds to rise and guide us—if we relinquish our cherished freedoms for what some may say is security—if we forget the law of brotherhood which Jesus taught in order to gain for ourselves a position of special privilege—if we do these things, we will have failed our obligation and doomed the future to strife and catastrophe.

But if, when the day of reconstruction comes, we assert our faith in the principles of our Christianity—if we face the problems of a sick and weary world with calm and judicious action—if we stifle hatred and greed with unselfishness and a will to sacrifice—if we endow our leaders with our belief in the principles of justice for all and our spirit of brotherly kindness—if we insist on the maintenance of our freedom and its extension to all the world of man—if we do these things and do them with a sincerity born of our deepest faith it will be our great privilege to give to the world of the future, an inheritance of peace and opportunity, such as man had hardly dared yet dream.

Yes, the shadows of great events hover upon us for we are a people and a generation with a destiny. What that destiny will be you and I will have a part in determining. We have both an obligation and an opportunity. Pray God we prove worthy.

MAYNARD VAN DYKE.

# UNITY

*"He Hath Made of One All Nations of Men"*

Volume CXXIX AUGUST, 1943 No. 6

## Editorial Comments

JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

I

In nothing is the abnormality of war more apparent than in its strange relationship to the calendar. In summer, life springs into new and lovely being. The trees put on their leaves, the grass grows green, the fields become fallow to the plow and fertile to the seed. The living reality and beauty of this world become suddenly apparent. And it is just at this time that war works its most dreadful havoc of destruction and death! We might possibly reconcile ourselves to this work if it came in the wintertime, when the world is ugly and dead. But, as it is, war is always at its worst when nature is at her best. There is a kind of final profanation in the devastation and slaughter of this mid-summer period, as of a child-bearing woman run through by a soldier's bayonet, or little children shot down by a firing squad. Another anomaly! The summer is the period of the year when men physically and spiritually relax. The tension of life is relieved for a time, its labors lightened, its attention diverted. Men play, and laugh, and idle in this interim of warm days and still nights. They "loaf and invite [their] souls," to quote Whitman's phrase. It is as though the age of innocence were come back again, to remind us all that except we become as little children, we cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. And it is just now that war is raging like a flood broke loose upon the landscape! Men are not children, but are suddenly become monsters. It is not an age of innocence, but of calculated bestiality and horror. There is no idleness, or play, or loafing today, but rather such a mobilization of energy as would rebuild the world if it were not so busy in destroying it. Only with the return of the winter season will war die down again as in a kind of animal-like hibernation, while in the civilian world the familiar tension of industrial and social activity will begin anew. Here is a fundamental contradiction between war and the nature of man, as between war and the world itself. War is unnatural, abnormal, ironical. Of course it is, for war is death, and death is a contradiction of life. War is the enemy of life, and therefore of man and God. Carried to its logical extremity, war would annihilate humanity, and turn this earth into the likeness of the dead, cold moon. All of which means that man cannot hope in the end to survive the experience of war, but must get rid of it forever.

II

How prone we all are to sweeping generalizations and judgments! Are such generalizations and judgments ever true? I remember a conversation years ago with Dr. William Walsh, of the Free Religious Church, London, in which I said something about the dreadful things that England had done in India. "Not England," he cried out, as though in pain, "but *Britain!*" "England," he went on, "is the country of Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, Hampton, Pym, Wilberforce, Clarkson, Ruskin, Macauley, Gladstone, Huxley, John Morley, and John Bright; Britain is the country of Marlborough, Hastings, Clive, Lord North, Cornwallis, Cecil Rhodes, Lord Cromer, Lord Curzon, Joseph Chamberlain, Lord Balfour. Never confuse the two!" This taught me a lesson, which applies to more than England. As there are two sides to every question, so there are two elements in every whole. Certainly two characters, like the two-faced Janus, in every country! Thus, here in America, we have a land represented by such men as Washington, Jefferson, Clay, Sumner, Lincoln, Cleveland, Woodrow Wilson, Channing, Parker, Phillips Brooks, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Jane Addams; and another land represented by such men as Aaron Burr, Preston Brooks, "Boss" Tweed, Richard Croker, Jay Gould, Jim Fiske, Matt Quay, Tom Platt, Boies Penrose, President Harding, and the Tea Pot Dome crowd. America is all heroic idealism, and all sodden corruption, according to the viewpoint. It is this which gives me an unconquerable hope for Germany. Hitler conquered and subdued the Reich, as Huey Long conquered and subdued Louisiana. But the Germany of Goethe, Brahms,

Harnack, Koch, Einstein, and Thomas Mann, though browbeaten and scattered, is still alive. Hitler, the Austrian corporal, is not half so true a representative of the real Germany as Martin Niemoeller, the Lutheran pastor. The same holds true, I insist, of Japan. Talk till breath is gone of Tojo, and I will talk of Kagawa. The saintly Christian has not preached his gospel all these years in vain—his multitudinous followers wait for the coming of the time. So no country, as no man, is all bad, or all good. There is good mingled always with bad, and bad with good. Civilization walks side by side with barbarism, and democracy with tyranny. The ape shares quarters with the saint. If you are cynical, you will see only the bad; if you are sentimental, you will see only the good. If you are clear-sighted and wise, you will see both—and join the fierce struggle to overcome evil with good.

III

A lecturer, returned from fifteen weeks of travel in great areas of this country, reports that there was "rarely ever so little enthusiasm for war." Why is this fact true? Because, among other things, we have at last arrived at a point of social development in this country where men are too civilized to feel enthusiasm over any war. War may be a lot of things—necessary, unavoidable, even just, according to your viewpoint; but it is always ugly, wasteful, tragic and fundamentally immoral. Nobody attempts to defend, least of all to glorify, war any more; those who support it still agree to lament it and apologize for it as a dreadful evil which must be endured as a means of escaping certain other evils regarded as still more dreadful. As this war is particularly dreadful, there is an especial absence of enthusiasm, for which there has been found no better substitute than a grim determination to see it through and then have done with it forever. But there are other reasons why no enthusiasm accompanies the fighting of this war. Thus, the war has not been sanctified by the statement of any noble purpose to fire the imaginations and stir the hopes of men. From the beginning there has been a failure on the part of responsible statesmen to lift men's souls as in the spirit of a crusade. To destroy Hitler, to defend one's native soil and way of life, to preserve civilization from the barbarian, these may be all well and good, but they are no more calculated to arouse enthusiasm than shooting a burglar, or putting out a fire. The atmosphere of calamity enshrouds this war and thus shows war in its naked horror, and we shudder as at an earthquake or a tornado. But there is a deeper reason still for this lack of enthusiasm. Suppose that we did have some purpose in this war to kindle us! Suppose that the Four Freedoms and the Atlantic Charter were fire instead of ashes! What assurance is there that the war would sweep us to our goal? There was idealism in the last war. Woodrow Wilson put it there—and the war was won. But no sooner was the truce declared than the idealism was forgotten, and the old imperialistic game of grab began anew. This experience has made men skeptical, if not cynical. There is "much disillusionment about the war," says our traveler quoted above. Men must be shown that tragedy won't happen again. And they are not being shown. On the contrary, in North Africa, in Jugoslavia, in India, the signs all point the other way. There is no lack of loyalty in this war. The people will stand by and see it through. But they are not going to enthuse—not under present conditions, nor perhaps under any conditions. Which is the one thing we can be enthusiastic about—that men now hate war, and would get rid of it for good and all!

IV

Thomas Paine wrote a famous book called *The Rights of Man.* Years later Joseph Mazzini wrote another famous book called *The Duties of Man.* In these two phrases are to be found the two poles of democracy. Both are necessary to hold together that cosmic sphere of the spirit which is freedom for mankind upon this earth. The fight for freedom begins, of course, with the battle for rights—their recognition, protection, and enjoyment. It was so in the last two centuries in the political field. It is so in this century in the economic field. Men fought for the freedom of the subject; and now they are fighting for the freedom of the worker. But victory in terms of rights is no complete or final victory. On the contrary, it may be a victory fatal to society. For men win rights not to exploit them for their own selfish advantage, but to use them in the service of the larger advantage of mankind. Rights, in other words, must be matched by duties. Men have not only privileges to enjoy but tasks to perform—that is, if freedom is to endure! If, when we have gotten our rights, we think that there is nothing to do but to sit 'round and exercise them, then we shall straightway lose all that we have gained. For rights are like plants in a garden—to be cultivated, and protected, and cared for by hard labor and exacting sacrifice. Thus only can we win the fruits of our sowing. So true is this that it may be said that the performance of duties increases in geometrical proportion with the enjoyment of rights. The greater our rights, the greater also our responsibilities. It is the freeman, not the slave, who must vote, pay taxes, provide for the common defense, and promote the general welfare. This it is which freemen today are failing to see. We are quick, as we should be quick, to demand our rights, but slow, as we should never be slow, to perform our duties. Josiah Royce summed up

the basic meaning of this two-fold truth of rights and duties when he declared that loyalty was the one great virtue of the soul. To be loyal to a family, or to a class, or to a country, or to humanity, is to fulfill one's duties to this larger social group of which one is a member. Then, in the abounding life of this group one finds the personal rights which make up the essence of true freedom.

V

The reaction has set in against labor in this country, and the tide will carry fast and far if labor does not put its house in order. Such reaction, if it once gets loose, would be a tragedy, for the emancipation of labor has been one of the great historic achievements of the last decade. Labor now has the beginning at least of a charter of human rights, and the damage or withdrawal of that charter would be an irreparable loss. But labor for the first time is tasting power, and power is working its usual corruption. "Power always corrupts," said the great Lord Acton, "and absolute power corrupts absolutely." We see the working of this insidious corruption in various aspects of labor's activities today. In the appearance of the criminal element, for example, which exactly parallels the rise of the criminal element in the early days of triumphant capitalism! We see it in the pronouncement and enforcement of arbitrary decrees, as in the contemporary case of Petrillo, of the Musicians' Union, who in the field of his influence is ruling the nation with the unlimited power of a tsar who knows no law but that of his own will. We see it lamentably in the assertion of class interests as over against the interests of the country as a whole, as in the case of John L. Lewis and the Miners' Union. That the miners have a case is unquestionable. But we all have cases in occasions of dispute, and we submit them to the agencies of government established by law to hear and settle them. That is the essence of democracy—to play the game, and if the game is unjust, to change the rules by appeal to the conscience of the people. Most serious is the question of liberty inside the union—the right of the individual worker to enter a union and to have a voice in the control of the union. Right here exists one of the most pressing issues in the whole field of American civil liberties. What all this means in terms of consequences is seen in the pernicious Connally-Smith Bill which was passed under the impact of an outraged public sentiment. At last, after long waiting, the labor-baiters were given their chance—and this legislation is the result. And let there be no doubt that a reactionary Congress was thus able to act because an outraged public opinion was behind it. Not even the President could stay or direct this opinion. We repeat—unless there comes a sudden change, labor is in for an awful fall.

VI

Apart from the Negro press itself, I have seen nothing on the Detroit riots to compare with the article by Thomas Sancton in the July 5th issue of the *New Republic*. This article was a fitting celebration of the great American holiday which commemorates that Declaration of Independence which proclaims that "all men are created equal." For it makes plain that what happened so tragically in Detroit was just a typical denial, so long familiar in this country, of racial equality as between blacks and whites, or men of any color, for that matter, in relation to our superior white race. What happened in Detroit, in other words, was only a particularly dramatic, fatal, and therefore shocking expression of what is going on all the time here in America in milder and therefore less noticeable forms. All kinds of attempts have been made to prove that the Detroit riots were caused by Nazi plotting. The newspapers were quick to make this assertion, and the public authorities promptly followed suit. But there was nothing in it! The F. B. I. has reported that investigation has uncovered no trace of Nazi conspiracy. There were subversive elements at work, of course. Our own typically American product, the Ku Klux Klan, was on the job. Rabble-rousers of the Gerald K. Smith and Frank Norris variety, long familiar in our American folkways, were fanning the winds of prejudice and hate. It has even been suggested that Negro agitators were busy in stirring up trouble—which may have been true, in view of the conditions of injustice and oppression which have long prevailed in Detroit, although we doubt if it was "stirring up trouble" so much as demanding fair play! But all these charges are just so much camouflage for the reality, which, in Detroit as elsewhere, is the determination of the whites to outlaw Negroes from the rights and privileges of our American life. This is an abomination always—akin to the Nazi determination to get rid of Jews in Europe! But it is a very particular abomination in a war which demands that all men of every color make sacrifice for what is described as freedom. In this war our Negro citizens and brethren have been treated atrociously, from the federal government and the U. S. Army, right down to the meanest little hoodlum in Detroit. "The Negroes don't start riots," writes Mr. Sancton. "They are the victims." True enough! The Negroes are always "the victims." It is the Negroes who get shot, the Negroes who get arrested, the Negroes who get maltreated, the Negroes who get lynched. The whites who think they can get away with this, are as ignorant and stupid as the Nazis who think they can get away with their horrors. Justice has a dreadful way of vindicating itself. We are far advanced in this country toward a race war.

# Jottings

No terror has yet silenced the voice of one singing bird. No blackout has yet dimmed the light of one single star. No bombing has yet disturbed the sleep of the peaceful dead. War has its limits!

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The Parthenon was destroyed by the Turks. The Rheims Cathedral in the last war and the Coventry Cathedral in this war were destroyed by the Germans. The Mainz and Cologne Cathedrals were destroyed by the English. War plays no favorites!

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A thing I cannot understand—how any American can want to "remember Pearl Harbor!" Remember Valley Forge and Yorktown, Lake Erie, the Alamo, Manila Bay, Chateau Thierry—yes! I can understand these. But it would seem to me that the sooner we forgot the shame and disgrace of Pearl Harbor the better.

Mr. Stalin seems rather hard to suit. North Africa was not a "second front," and now Sicily is "not the second front the Russians want." We desire to please, Mr. Stalin, but really it's getting a little difficult.

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The gasoline situation is improving, and it is getting much more serious; the fuel oil prospects for this coming winter are better, and they are worse; the crops this year will be as good as last year, and will be 30 per cent less than last year; the price situation is well in hand, and is passing beyond all control. Thus daily are we regaled with information from Washington!

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Men rage at Hitler—and laugh at Mussolini. The one is held in fear and hate, the other in contempt and derision. Which is the more dire fate?

JOHN HAYNES HOLMES.

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# Ralph Waldo Emerson and the Civilizing of Religion

R. LESTER MONDALE

When Ralph Waldo Emerson died, his fellow Americans were well aware that the country had lost a great man; but little did they realize just how big and important that man actually was. Little did they anticipate how succeeding generations would pore over his works. His contemporaries thought of him as a poet after a fashion, but little did they anticipate that this Emerson would one day be thought of as the poetic equal or perhaps even the superior of Longfellow and Whittier. They thought of him as a social progressive, but little did they anticipate that half a century later radicals would be studying and quoting his penetrating indictments of the shortcomings of a society based on trade and I.O.U.'s. What holds for his poetry and social insights holds equally well for his living influence not only on successive generations of those who found themselves returning again and again to his "Self Reliance" and "Compensation," but also on ideas of travel, on manners, on the arts, on the meanings of Americanism, and on religion—on which he is quoted, I dare say, more frequently in America than any man outside of the Bible.

But in all these roles he was no more adequately appreciated than he was as a man, as a human being. So it has remained for our own times to get behind the conventional picture of the sweet, smiling, saintly, almost effeminate seer who fled to Concord and barricaded himself in his study, and to get to know the real man—the man with the sparkling eyes and the strong, deep, masculine voice, the man of almost god-like good sense, the man who was not above running off with Thoreau or Hawthorne for an evening of skating on Walden Pond, or stripping off his clothes and diving into Concord River and drying in the sun. He was doing this as late as his seventy-eighth year. Here was not merely a Delphic oracle getting inspiration out of the blue, but a truly human being who had to work hard to get results—vast reading, vast observation, multitudinous contacts with men and women—his thoughts first going into his Journal, from the Journal into sermons, from the sermons into his early lectures, and then from lectures which he had delivered scores of times and corrected and corrected again, into the immortal *Essays*. Here was one who was not a teetotaler, who did not hesitate to utter a good explosive oath when he felt like it, who was passionately loved by his wife, adored by his children, who attended regularly what we today would call Concord's Rotary Club, who hoed in his garden, drank two cups of coffee and ate a hearty piece of pie every morning for breakfast.

Emerson's religion, his contemporaries knew full well, was not a half-civilized fairy story religion for juvenile minds, with a heavenly throne and on it a manlike God who created everything in October, 4004 B.C., who enabled one man to walk on water and another to make the sun and moon stand still, who sent all souls either to endless bliss in heaven or eternal anguish in hell. Thus, although contemporaries understood what his religion *was not* they were far from clear as to just what it *was*—that question puzzled them as it still puzzles our own generation as we probe ever deeper into the depths of this man's life and works to discover, if we can, the secrets of his strange aliveness and power, his wonderful good sense, his amazing beatific serenity.

What Emerson called the Oversoul, that all-pervading creative power he sensed in all things while strolling with Henry David Thoreau along the shores of Walden Pond, seemed not only vague to his contemporaries but verging on the preposterous. His idea that the world of nature, of suns, moons, stars, seas, plains, was the mere outward appearance of something far more

deeply interfused, a motion and a power that he found rolling through the depths of his own self, and which, in fact, was his deepest, truest self—this was all frightfully tenuous, transcendental, and certainly not scientific. Contemporaries thought he was being very poetic when he wrote of how if he could stroll through the Concord woods, or shut himself in the solitude of his study overlooking the marshes, then this Oversoul power took possession of him. It was very poetic again when he said that when he tried to write without this sense of the Oversoul his intellect was blind; and poetic yet again were his words about reproving his son and setting his adult will against that of the boy, the degradation of beating the child. "But if I renounce my will, and act for the soul, setting that up as umpire between us two, out of his young eyes looks the same soul; he reveres and loves with me." And how pleasingly poetic and idealistic was Emerson's idea that others, even the common people, could live by his transcendental philosophy.

> I am not a genius; you, the gunsmith, the wagoner, the farmer, the clerk, the teacher—deep in you also is this Oversoul. If only you can become aware of this creative power in nature and at the same time discover the same force in the depths of your inner life, then your intellect will no longer be blind to the miracle-packed world about you, then the thoughtless jibe or smirk or dig will cease to hurt, and, refreshed, you can shoulder your old loads and stride up the long, long, road with a song in your hearts.

Emerson was not playing with pretty words and daubing pages with gorgeous phrases; he was dealing with what he knew full well were inescapable realities. If he felt that the world of suns, moons, stars, seas, plains, and woodlands was not quite as material and as solid as his neighbors believed it to be, and if he felt that in and through all nature and actually composing all things was a creative power far more vast, he knew that he had on his side the intuitive insights of the greatest minds of the ages. He knew that with him were the awakening minds of all primitive men who as they watched the sudden materialization, out of a clear blue sky, of cloud banks and lightning and roaring thunder and rushing winds instinctively looked beyond the visible to the invisible. He knew that with him was the Greek philosopher, Democritus, who sensed that beyond the surface appearance of things was an invisible but even more real world. With him was Plato who also had maintained that the visible nature men ordinarily behold is not the whole of nature, and that even what they behold is not as it seems. With him were Plotinus and the Neo-Platonists of Alexandria; there were the Upanishads and the Bhagavad-Gita of India; there was the God-intoxicated Jew, Spinoza, with his teaching that if men had a hundred senses instead of the present five still would there be realms of the invisible about which they would live in ignorance; and with him also were the titans of German philosophy, Immanuel Kant, Fichte, Hegel.

But, we ask, have Emerson's intuitions any scientific basis? This is the question before which his religion seemed, until a few years ago, to fail to stand up. Suppose we take a look at the facts.

The most concise presentation of the relevant scientific facts I have yet come across was in three exhibits some years ago in Chicago in the Science Building of the Century of Progress Exposition. As I describe each of these, I am sure many of you will recall the feelings of wonderment that possessed you when you stood there and studied them.

The first exhibit gave the naked human eye a beautiful glimpse of the pulsing, driving, shooting activity eternally going on behind the apparently hard, solid surfaces of all objects in nature. You who were there may recall having stepped over to a heavy, circular table in which, at regular distances around the circular edge, were microscopes. As you looked into one of these magnifying instruments you saw a myriad of minute, shining bubbles. These bubbles appeared to be floating in air; and as you looked at them you began to notice how each of these bubbles was being shaken, bumped, violently agitated. Why the violent agitation? Physicists tell us that these bubbles were being constantly bombarded by particles, molecules of air so small that no magnifying lens could detect them. They tell us also that these infinitesimal particles of air bombarding the bubbles are never at rest, but are always speeding violently this way and that, and as eternal in their motion as the rotating and revolving of the planets in the heavens. Physicists explain, moreover, that not only are particles of air in violent motion, but underneath the surfaces of wood is the same endless activity. In the cold grey stones of Tennyson's seashore is this same relentless activity. Even in the depths of the bar of iron is the same restlessness, a clashing and crashing so steady and so persistent that its sound coming through amplifiers to the ears of the physicist is heard as a thin, high musical note, the song of the atoms.

The next exhibit takes us deeper into the depths of nature's invisible structure. Nearby in Science Hall, in a sort of open closet, and in the far wall was a magnifying glass about a foot in diameter. Beyond the glass, and greatly magnified, there was, some of you may remember, a little window. Beyond this little window and in a moist atmosphere, and at intervals of about fifteen seconds, you saw numerous thin streaks of smoke or steam. These steaming streaks you saw were the tracks left by the helium atoms as they flew through the air from the nearby tube of radium in which radium atoms were disintegrating into lead and helium. Here, in the disintegration of one seemingly solid element into two others is absolute proof, physicists tell us, that not only helium, lead, radium, but all things are made of something even more basic—something electrical in nature.

The third exhibit, by far the easiest to look at, was a sort of signboard about two feet square, and on it, arranged in checkerboard fashion, were dozens of little neon bulbs. As you stood before this sign with its many neon bulbs you noticed that there was hardly a moment when some of them were not flashing. It was as if little, crooked streaks of lightning were striking from top to bottom of the board. These flashes were made by the cosmic rays coming to this planet from somewhere in space where lead and helium atoms are being utterly demolished. And the cosmic rays are nothing more or less, we are told, than the wandering bundles of energy that solid atoms become when they cease to be atoms.

Now, consider the three exhibits side by side: Look through the microscope at the scintillating bubbles agitated by the particles of air, and your old world of dead sand banks and inert rock piles becomes charged with an eternal energy. Look at the thin steamy paths taken by the helium atoms, and the solid matter becomes resolved into nothing more than electricity. Look at the lightning streaks flashed across the neon bulbs by the cosmic rays and you have seen the possibility of the solid earth we stand upon transformed into cosmic rays, bundles of something as tenuous as the ethereal spaces beyond the stratosphere.

Now I ask you: Was Emerson's intuition that the visible world of nature was merely the appearance of a creative soul of power so preposterous or so unscientific?

Ah, we hear, he may have been right on that score but dear old Emerson living in the Arcadian seclusion of Concord, making his living so quietly with his pen and his beautiful lecture voice, was merely a poetic romantic, with no first-hand idea either how red in tooth and claw nature really is in its struggle-to-exist aspects, and how harsh and tragic is life itself! Emerson's religion is a very pleasant and nice fair-weather religion; all right as long as everything goes well. . . . But!

Let us look a little deeper in this man's life. When Waldo was but eleven his father, the minister of the First Church in Boston, died, leaving his widow and six children in such poverty that in order to keep her brood alive she had to take in boarders—and that for Boston was no small comedown. But taking in boarders was not enough and before long this woman, who with her husband had so fondly cherished the idea of a first-rate education for each of their children, found herself driven to take the Emerson library and get what she could out of it on the auction block. Even so, so poor were they that Ralph Waldo and his brother Charles had to take turns running errands or playing in the snow—they had, between them, but one overcoat. Fourteen years of age, ready for Harvard, the school of his father, and available only a few dollars from considerate relatives. Undaunted, however, Ralph Waldo went right ahead on the basis of his getting a job as messenger boy for the President and faculty for his room, and on the basis of waiting tables for the other young men for three-fourths of his board. Through Harvard, but in nowise distinguished as a scholar, he set himself to follow in the footsteps of his ideal, the great Channing, and at eighteen years of age he registered in the Harvard Divinity School. After two weeks, however, his thin, frail physique broke down and the pages of the books became blurs before his eyes. A year of helping a farmer uncle, of exercising and building up, and then with six more years of teaching and studying when he could in the Divinity School, he finally completed his ministerial preparation. By this time two of his beloved brothers, Charles and Edward, were stricken with tuberculosis and were dying. Consequently it was no over-confident or jubilant young man who at twenty-six plunged into the ministry of the Second Church in Boston. To make matters even worse, young Emerson had ideas, ideas of his own, and shortly he found himself going through that bitterest of all bitter experiences—giving of his heartfelt best and getting in return dark and unhappy looks from his hearers. Calling once on an aged and dying Revolutionary War veteran he consoled the man as best he could only to find the old warrior rising up in wrath: "Young man, if you don't know your business, you had better go home."

In his Journal dated December 21st of his twenty-sixth year is a happy notation: "I have now been four days engaged to Ellen Louisa Tucker. Will my Father in Heaven regard us with kindness . . . . and prosper and eternalize our affection!" She was truly a phantom of delight—light-hearted, laughing, bubbling over with joyousness. Then he married her, eighteen and frail, but adoring her—his Queen of Sheba as he called her —as she adored him. For February 8th of his twenty-eighth year was this entry in the Journal: "Ellen Tucker Emerson died . . . Tuesday morning, 9:00 o'clock." Five days later he wrote:

> This miserable apathy, I know, may wear off . . . I almost fear it will. I shall go among my friends with a tranquil countenance. Again I shall be amused. . . . But will the dead be restored to me? . . . Shall I ever again be able to connect the face of outward nature, the mists of the morn, the star of eve, the flowers, and all poetry, with the heart and life of an enchanting friend? No—There is one birth, one baptism, and one first love. . . .

For two years the young minister walked every day to Roxbury where he stood beside the grave of Ellen Tucker Emerson.

Not long after her death he resigned from a ministry in which he could not be entirely honest with himself. Having given up his profession, without the one he loved, here was a person at twenty-nine with trouble enough to sour the best of men. And what I have said of his troubles so far is only what I could say, were there space, about troubles—from the death of his son and the embezzlement of his savings, to the extreme hardships of lecturing all over the country and the burning of his home—troubles which pursued him almost to his dying day.

In such circumstances the average man would have found himself many a time beyond the "end of his rope." A person, so dogged by difficulty and misfortune, would not surprise us if he solaced himself with liquor or childishly threw himself into the arms of an authoritarian religion with its promise of perfect bliss in a future life. He might easily sit back and say to himself, "What of it; no one will know the difference a hundred years from now," and proceed to scoff and sneer the rest of his life at those who do think there is a difference. He might feel dreadfully sorry for himself and drag on through the rest of his days with a doleful face in whose lines all beholders would read: Don't you see how terribly I have suffered? Don't you feel sorry for me? Won't you make allowances for my inabilities? He might simply have done as most persons do in emergencies—he might have reacted as the animal does by turning on the emotions, by becoming irritable, nervous, impatient.

Emerson's life and his writings, however, are an eloquent, almost sacred, illustration of that other and better way out that all men and women find themselves seeking with an ardor directly in proportion to the degree to which they are civilized. Emerson, for some strange reason that he was never able entirely to explain, found that the moment he could stroll off by himself and lose himself in a landscape, a refreshing stream of energy seemed to swell up from within him.

A queer experience some would say. But sometime when your face is scowling with heartburn, and your eyes smart for the hours of sleep you have missed, and a lump rises in your throat at the approach of people, and you dare not take a day away from your work, try something like the Emersonian way out.

Think of the world as he thought of it—as the appearance of an infinite creative unfolding energy or power so mysterious as to transcend all attempts of the human mind to picture it. Think of your self as he thought of his self—as the appearance again of the same creative, unfolding, mysterious energy or power. Go into solitude. Admit to yourself that your strength is at an end; you have no more push or drive left. Let the capitalist system, if you are a capitalist, or the Socialist party, if you are a socialist, go to smash. No matter what happens to the children and the house for the

next hour, you can do nothing. If you have aches and pains, stop fighting them. Let them have their way with you, kill you if they can. Sink into a chair. Become so weak you get the feeling that you cannot even lift your head or a finger. Let yourself go, and let nature have its way. This is what Emerson did after the reformer pests, the Muggletonians, the abolitionists, the agrarians, the bran and pumpkin dieters who lectured him over his Thanksgiving turkey, had kept him from his writing and preparation of lectures for hours on end. Utterly exhausted he went into the woods or into his garden, and there in complete passive receptivity let outer and inner forces of nature take over and heal his tired mind and body.

If this experience could be put into a formula it would go thus: Let yourself go, and let nature come in. Let nature come in: then into our talk, into our writing, into our walking, will flow this deeper energy from within; and others, strangely enough, will recognize its source and respect it.

Emerson's serenity was not that of the juvenile and sheltered romantic; it was a serenity of the kind that comes only to one who has known trouble and who has looked more than once into the pallid faces of those he loved more than life itself. His was the serenity of one who knows nature's faults, yet loves her still; man's faults, yet loves him still; and that, I have been assured, is true love.

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# Trumpets on New Horizons

EDITED BY LUCIA TRENT

### Does It Matter?

God has promised He would feed
My soul and tent each folded need.
Does it matter what my creed?

LAUREL LAUER.

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### A Song of Streets

Mine is a song of streets
Beaten down with the years'
Pitiless blows.
Mine is a song men left
Unsung where every day
A walker goes.

He goes in silence there,
Without a song, except
The even beat
Futilely marking out
The slow enigma of
His marching feet.

Mine is a song of streets
Where no songs are. I too
Must move along
Walking in step with men
And marking with my feet
The walker's song.

RAYMOND KRESENSKY.

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### The Lynchers

Hang him from a tree!
It is spring,
White and pink blossoms perfume
The soft night air;
Hang him from a tree!
Backs are humped,
Sneaking feet creep stealthily,
White, iron-veined hands drag
A battered, dark-skinned man.

In God's image were they all made,
The light, the dark,
Human blood flows through all their veins,
But a twisted brain,
In a white man's head
Proclaimed, "We are superior."
The thought wriggled like a biting snake,
Glistened on its tongue,
Blinding other brains, coiled like worms.

Hang him from a tree!
The lyncher's blood, festered with venom,
Flows cold and white,
His breath is an icy wind;
The night air and perfumed blossoms
Breathe warmly of spring,
While the blood
Of a battered, dark-skinned man,
Colors the earth red.

ROSE MADELINE HARRIS.

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### Two Flags

Shall I sing of my country alone
  Or shall I sing of the world,
Salute and honor one flag,
  Or work for a greater unfurled?

Shall I think in limited terms,
  Only one country's good,
Or of justice toward all men,
  A world of Brotherhood?

Two flags I would like to salute,
  One of my country unfurled,
The other, as honored and great,
  A flag of the whole wide world.

ADDIE L. KLEIST.

# Our Age of Unreason—And After

VICTOR S. YARROS

A distinguished psychoanalyst has written a thought-provoking book on "our age of unreason." He deals in this work with the Nazi-Fascist revolt against all that is humane and reasonable in our civilization. He discusses the theories of Pareto, Spengler, Nietzsche, and other advocates of brute might and contempt for the common man. He himself has no sympathy with these reactionary pseudo-philosophers, but he is impressed and oppressed by their influence.

Certainly, the central ideas of the Nazi-Fascist theorists are no monopoly of Hitler's Germany or Mussolini's Italy. In this country and in free Europe many middle-class and upper-class men and women share those obscurantist notions. There are still, or perhaps again, bitter critics of democracy who long for "elite" domination and for the liquidation of the principles of the Hebrew-Christian ethics, of the Renaissance, and of the Enlightenment era in France. There are Fascist groups and organs of illiberal opinion everywhere and all of them favor slavery for the masses and total tyranny in government.

Now, the student of history is aware of the fact that at various times leaders and eminent thinkers have overemphasized the role of reason and underrated that of human passions, emotions, and will. Too much *has* been expected of the intellect, of logic, of general ideas. Knowledge is *not* virtue. Conduct, "three-fourths of life," is not governed solely, or even mainly, by accepted or professed beliefs. To recognize the right is not necessarily to practice it. We often sin against the light, fall lamentably short of our supposed standards. Pride, appetite, fear, vanity, envy, lust for power easily triumph over moral sentiments or the dictates of our consciences. The categorical imperative, alas, is not always obeyed.

If our age, then, had merely discovered or rediscovered the instincts, the intuitions, and the passions in their relation to human conduct, and had thus forced a reappraisal of the true role of the intellect, it would have rendered an inestimable service to the social sciences and to practical morality. But the age of unreason is guilty of asserting that not only is the intellect weak and often impotent, but that our instincts and passions are base, low, brutal, and our civilization a thin veneer, if not a hollow pretense. If this theory were valid and well-founded, we should despair of civilization and renounce all our aspirations and hopes of a better and lovelier world. If we are savages, and must remain savages, then our intellect, as Aristotle said, makes us the most unholy and vicious of animals. Our science merely increases our destructive power. We can demolish in a year, thanks to our weapons, what it has taken decades or centuries to build up, thanks to the same science. If we are naturally cruel and sadistic, our fate is sealed. Sooner or later we shall rebarbarize our society.

However, this theory is fallacious and shallow. Even Freud, who is accused by many ignorant persons of having laid bare the essential depravity of human nature, said that, if the revelations concerning the unconscious show that we are worse than we think we are, they also show that we are better than we think we are. The evil in us is deep and strong, but so also is the good. We cannot afford to be too complacent about ourselves; we must confront our evil side and fight it unceasingly. But the fact that we *can* fight the kingdom of evil within us, and do at times, is significant evidence on the credit side of our ledger.

Such civilization as we have achieved is certainly not based on malice, hatred and enmity. All that is noble and valuable in it reflects and expresses the better side of human nature. Even the animals, as we know, have the same good qualities—mutualism, cooperation, in short, altruism. Nature below the human level is *not* all "tooth and claw." Human society, despite all its defects and failures, bears witness to the softer, gentler, finer qualities of our race. And there can be no question as to the certainty of further moral and social progress. The same motives which have operated to bring us to the present juncture will prompt us to resume our efforts and our advance after the slaughter and the devastation shall have stopped. The idea of progress current in the last century has had to be modified, to be sure. Progress is not steady, uninterrupted, guaranteed. But tragic interruptions and lapses *are* followed by steps upward and forward.

We say, indeed, that a few more global wars like the present one may ruin and bury our civilization. Such rhetoric is natural and inevitable. Still, even after several more world wars millions of men and women would remain on this earth, as would millions of books, pictures, monuments, laboratories, scientific instruments, musical masterpieces, and the inspiring beauties of nature. The degenerate Nazis and Fascists cannot burn and wipe out these cultural and spiritual possessions. Hence they cannot *actually* destroy civilization. The reaction against their false and absurd doctrines cannot be delayed much longer even in the areas they have controlled and dominated for a decade or more.

That reaction will be felt in all the realms of the spirit—in science, in philosophy, in religion, in letters, in the arts, and in politics and economics.

This does not mean that we can afford to compromise, palter with crime and savagery, give our mad enemies any quarter. No, we must fight them and utterly rout them. But we must not forget that after the war millions of Germans, Italians, and Japanese will repudiate the reckless tyrants who plunged their respective countries into this unnecessary and wasteful conflict, and will offer, in all sincerity, to work with their liberators in all constructive and beneficial enterprises. Our age of unreason will be succeeded by an age of restoration and healing under the guidance of reason as well as sympathy and good will.

The lessons of our terrible experiences will be turned to good use and should help us purge our sciences and pseudo-sciences of the errors and distortions found in the noxious teachings of the Spenglers, Paretos, and Nietzsches.

Meantime, it is clear that one of the lessons can be taken to heart here and now, without awaiting the order to cease firing. That lesson has to do with our educational system and our ideas of pedagogy and school organization. Our education has been one-sided, narrow, scrappy, superficial. We have unduly neglected the emotions. We have paid little attention to character-building. We have assumed that good will takes care of itself. The new psychology has scarcely af-

fected education. Knowledge has not been synthesized. It has been a thing of shreds and patches. We graduate young men and young women ignorant of ethics, of history, of philosophy, of political science. Without vision, that is, without a philosophy of life or guiding principles of conduct, societies decay. And, of course, philosophy is in one aspect love of wisdom, and men without character cannot love wisdom.

Now, it is not easy to cultivate the emotions and build sound and elevated character. Mere preaching will not do it. As some eminent thinker has said, admonish school children to be good, and they will not only think you a bore, but will be tempted to run out and commit some crime. Character-building is an *art*. It has to be done indirectly, subtly, adroitly. It is done best by example and by the creation of a certain environment—serious, lofty, inspiring. Men and women must be gently introduced to ideals, and conditioned to fall in love with them. Virtue and kindliness must be made attractive. Duty, despite Kant, must be translated into pleasure and privilege.

If the school and the college tolerate race discrimination, snobbery, indolence, waste of time on trivialities, then the atmosphere is certainly *not* conducive to the formation of the right character. If the teachers and professors do not know how to win respect, affection, and emulation, then one of the prerequisites of character-building is lacking.

Familiarity with the great masterpieces in letters, music, and painting; amateur acting in classical and modern plays, and cultivation of the theater habit under judicious and discriminating direction; group discussion of philosophy and metaphysics—these resources may be named among the major factors in the successful formation of character. To point this out is to remind ourselves once more of the woeful and unpardonable shortcomings and omissions in our present educational system.

A balanced educational system is not likely to produce unbalanced fanatics, worshippers of force, willing slaves of a tyrant and paranoiac. It will produce practical idealists, humanitarians thoroughly committed to the scientific method of arriving at conclusions. Such trained and disciplined men and women will not revolt against reason, any more than they will disparage good will. The half-baked and arbitrary fallacies of the Spenglers and Paretos will not make much headway among them. It is for us of the generation now in charge to liquidate the age of unreason and of cruel misrepresentation of human nature and its potentialities.

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# Exiles of the Spirit

JOSEPH REMENYI

It is so easy to take a false step in the world of values in a wretched age when, as someone aptly remarked, it is almost impossible to find an Archimedian point of spiritual security. Our bewildered and bewildering civilization seems to be distinguished by warped souls, by sadistic and masochistic monsters, by agents of dilated and defiled truth and by their satellites. The indestructible norm of truth is sacrificed for wishes and aims which reduce the practical wisdom of empiricism to travesty, and make of garrulity a strangely discomforting experience. The absorption in unproved or doubtful values, the tendency of dismissing anything that rises above the obvious significance of slogans and catchwords, may be considered as the misery of life's mystery.

The allegorical and symbolical stature of literature is observable in every great literary work. It is clear that whenever the imaginative sensitiveness of an individual is attracted to questions whose answer lies outside the sphere of rational definitions, the need of creative expression becomes imperative. When persistent and crude cynics speak about the "bunk" of religion, or certain types of psychologists refer to its "illusory character," to its so-called somnambulistic pattern which is not equal to the pattern of common sense, these objectors suffer from the conceit of irritated infallibility. Evidently they know very little of the intense conflict of a creative mind; indeed, they seem to be aliens to the following words, inspired by humility, of Van Gogh: "I am an artist; in other words, I am a seeker. My body and soul are in this struggle. I do not say I know. I am searching."

Creative literature does not extend her dominion solely over the empirical; the dualism of life, nay, the pluralism of living principles requires imaginative curiosity which by its very nature could not admit an insistence on the purely tangible or subtly comprehensible features of existence. The dilemma of the creative spirit as a need of spiritual deliverance is observable even in those poets and writers who turn away from religion because they consider it a superstitious fuss over nothing. Halford E. Luccock in his *Contemporary American Literature and Religion* correctly states that "the failure of organized religion to appreciate and profit from present-day realism has been a calamity of the first order. It has meant a heavy handicap to its efforts to bring spiritual resources to bear on the life of the time." This should clearly imply that professional religionists often close their eyes to the dated or up-to-date wares of literary realism, instead of paying attention to the kinship of religion and literature. In an age, swollen with conceit and humiliated by its consequences, a great latitude must be permitted for the evaluation of poetic and religious similarities and differences. Nevertheless the fact remains, to quote E. A. Robinson, that "we set ourselves to grow in the wrong earth and soon we had no roots." After all, "freedom under God," should indicate that every creative expression, both tragic and humorous, ought to be an attempt to reconcile us not merely with the agnostic illusion of life, but with a belief that in the realm of the creative spirit man performs a significant dialogue between himself and the unknown. It is not an out-of-date weakness to assert the religious perspective of literature; as a matter of fact, in looking for the center of the cosmos one finds many similar symbols in literature and in religion. For many people it is virtually impossible to see this similarity. The trend of the last two centuries in the direction of nonconforming reason, positivism, evolutionism, mechanical and scientific determinism, class interest, and so forth, was a characteristic example of omnipotent rationalism; its

companion was opinionated aggressiveness or disillusionment.

Far be it from me to call these concepts fraudulent. But consciously or unconsciously they added to the problems of the exiled spirit in literature. The "triumph" of science was not the triumph of "understanding." The "benefits" of science were not always reasonable as the first and second World Wars indicate. The weight of positive knowledge did not add to the weight of wisdom. No wonder that Henri Bergson was enthusiastically welcomed by those who believed in the validity of intelligence, but also in the authenticity of intuition; and while he first received attention in a typical bourgeois regime of France, his chastisement of excessive intellectuality was an eloquent criticism of men and women all over the world, who had contempt for that thoroughness of intelligence which includes intuition. Regardless of whether we attribute this attachment to the spirit or to the effects of a traumatic condition or to an acrobatic trick of the nerves, the very idea of professing a belief in the interconnection of literature and religion should contribute to the understanding of a problem which cannot be exclusively approached in a matter-of-fact manner. The biological nature of the "spirit's" context follows from our knowledge of human nature. Yet it is still a fragmentary knowledge by virtue of the manifestation of the spirit. Journeymen of book reviewing like to discern the "divine spark" in writers and poets; and though this phrase may be the result of weariness, and thus of an incapacity to hunt for a more original expression, nevertheless it is more than ornate triviality. There are figures of speech which once were fresh and true and designated beliefs. The dwarf and the giant in the human soul, of which Vittorio Alfieri speaks in one of his poems, cannot be permanently interlocked; they must seek some sort of freedom. Admitting that the vision of the dwarf and of the giant may not and logically does not fit the same frame of the universe, yet one cannot question their need for a reality which is above an empirical level. Every genuine vision, even that of a pure pragmatist or rationalist, and much more so that of a dreamer, touches the surface of the probable and the possible, and sometimes it reaches the core of things.

This image should not suggest an awakened abstraction, but rather an immunity to abstraction which complies with one of the main postulates of literature and religion: that is, *concreteness*. Even in cubist art the motivating spirit is brought out in sharp relief. Concreteness is the nature of art. In the mind of the critic and in the mind of the theologian, abstractions are apt to discover a suitable place, and this is justified; but in the heart of the creative writer and in the heart of a sincerely religious human being an experience is made concretely valid through the capacity of being able to yield to feeling and to express it. In literature it is feeling that helps to reconstruct the affinity of a religious experience; the intellect is only then equalled to this experience when its certainty of values is in agreement with those of the spirit. Routine develops technique but narrows the sensitiveness needed for choice; consequently the religious significance of literature very often remains a closed book to those whose task it is to analyze books or to write books.

Emile Zola is a good case in point. Less celebrated writers than this exponent of French literary realism turned back from religion with a voice that conveyed heroic words to social justice and humaneness. Notwithstanding Zola's deliberate and careful repudiation of ecclesiastic blackness and whiteness, the fact is that his passion for social justice, as he understood it, was a commentary on his need of religious balance; it was his analytical intelligence, his "enlightenment" that separated him from the convictions of a religious spirit. In other words, his feelings, though in a strange and seemingly utterly irreligious way, freed him from the formulas of theories. No honest creative writer or poet writes his *mene tekel* on a paper wall that sooner or later crumbles; indeed, he does not wish to antagonize eternity.

On the other hand, there are writers and poets whose feelings and thoughts reject the temptation of dividing their functional relation to the religious activities of the spirit. Paul Claudel is this type of a writer. In the sphere of creative work the secret of his religious significance lies in the psychological fact that, as a poet and as a man, his emotions and his intellect aimed at the same goal, that is, being conscious of God and believing in resurrection. In the region of Zola's novels religion is supplemented with humanitarianism; in the region of Claudel's work religion and humanitarianism, feeling and thought, faith and knowledge, are drawn into a unity that makes him irresistibly a singer of the spirit. Zola had a social conscience; Claudel has a sense of the original sin. It would be wrong to twist the argument in such manner as to say that Zola's humanitarianism was ethical and not religious; Zola's anti-clerical attitude was provoked by institutionalism, but his love for his fellowmen was filled with an excitement of religious faith without possibly ever having known it. His immunity to dogmas did not make him immune to the spirit that obeys dogmas in a different sphere, as Paul Claudel's relation to God did not make him invulnerable as a human. The spirit of the writer and the poet, regardless of his convictions, is then menaced when he ceases to be a creative artist, and thus betrays truth as he is capable of revealing it. In a true sense of this view, Julien Benda's interpretation of the treason of the men of letters is not sufficiently severe in its condemnation and admonition of this betrayal of the spirit; it misses the point by failing to recognize how this modern plague disgraced the religious features of creative expression.

Individuals, in common with culture, have their stages of religious indifference or of religious intolerance. An epoch that underscores irreligion or lightheartedly repeats the striking incongruousness between religious doctrines and facts that seem to outmode the demands of the spirit, is prone to underestimate ruins and is inclined to overrate buildings in construction. Religion is always prepared to meet man; however, man is not always prepared to meet religion. Saint Augustine knew this in ancient times, and Aldous Huxley expresses it in modern times; even fact-finding writers know this, as they carry in their hearts the treachery of mere statistics.

A poet knows how to pierce through matter, despite its resistance and despite the emptiness that matter may reveal. The secret of the creative mind springs from a vision of harmoniousness without which there would be no desire for penetration. Every creative spirit is, of course, engaged in the subjective solution of eternity, though it may only touch the visible. Every creative spirit is rooted in the mystical unknown, though in his philosophy the creator may propose a

materialistic solution of problems and suggest a rationalizable sensitiveness of reactions. To be sure, it would be insultingly unintelligent to assume that feeling and intellect can be disregarded in any human procedure associated with creativeness. Even in emphatically emotional literary artists the interaction of these two factors is indispensable. In literature as well as in religion the immaterial element of the spirit is indefinable. But literature, like religion, protects one against the vanity of practical infallibility. Comic literature, by defying deformity, serves the same purpose. An unimaginative rationalizer is unable to discover traces of spirituality in anything, including literature. Moreover a person of this kind is usually intolerant with those who need faith in an irrational sense (on a religious plane this is the only legitimate faith), and such person is apt to consider the grappling with mystery as an unreasonable affliction. There are people for whom *deus ex machina* interference seems more logical than an obscure pattern of human fate that requires clear understanding. Nothing human is alien to them except those humans who endeavor to be in accord with the ceaseless need of seeing in this world more than a mere spectacle of inconsistencies.

Furthermore, it should be stated that truth cannot be visualized without an imaginative approach. Life is only then complete when it subjects man to the quest of truth. Literature and truth must co-exist in order to fulfill their function. The philosophic tenet of every imaginative writer and poet (although he may be as naive as a child and literally ignorant about philosophy as a system of thought) must be an adherence to truth. Unless the poet or the writer shows interest in the inscrutable enigma of life, it is presumptuous to speak about form as his ultimate goal of creative expression. Form is not design, but the substance of things shaped and brought out by the ideological and expressive sensitiveness of the creative mind.

Unfortunately we have too many exiles of the spirit today to whom this sort of reasoning seems incredibly out of times. By studying nature, by trying to perceive man's place in it, by introducing into this study the idea of values determined by society or by the irony of events (which is a different name for society concerned in asserting its rules and prejudices) these people emphasize categories which confuse the function of literature. They do not see in it a vehicle of truth; they are, sometimes, willing to admit that literature may serve recreation or may be used as a tool influencing the social views of men. Naturally it is an old axiom that literature offers pleasure; it is a newer one that it offers social instruction. But it should be stated that a true sense of a literary perspective is more than a caprice of the infinite; *it is a passion of the spirit to be re-united with meaning.* Even bad poets think that their verses conquer dust and ashes. A genuine creator exposes destiny to its original nakedness. No great literary work can be separated from the immanent. The pattern of creativeness imposes upon the creator an empirical outlook, sharpened by imagination and by the innate vision of well-chosen words. Exiles of the spirit seem to forget that a poet favors us with an introduction into the world of undisguised reality; and if the creator is genuine, through creativeness the heretofore imprisoned spirit gets free and makes us free, regardless of whether the work was done in a realistic or in a romantic manner. It is not the concept of the writer and the poet that is really important (this concept may be social or individual, gay or gloomy), but it is the concreteness of experience that his art suggests, the profundity of his symbols, the integration of contradictions into unity, disengaging his human limitations from the plight of their fragmentariness, and enabling us readers to see, to sense, and to feel the essence of things.

The creative mind (thus becoming active in a spiritual sense) gives the mystery of fate an opportunity to appear in the rhythm of poems, plays, novels, short stories, essays. Through literary art, life presents a view that stirs the heart, stimulates imagination, and strengthens one's determination of not succumbing to stereotyped consolations and finalities. Successful intuition and authentic articulation transcend the horizon of the Croceian version of self-expression. For that matter, it is not out of place to maintain that akin to religion, literature, at the cost of human pride, arrives at the need of salvation. Catharsis and salvation are twin terms. Dogmatically speaking, there is a dividing line between those who believe in revelation and those who believe in exaltation; but in creative literature, knowledge of the substance of things obtained through artistic expression has a religious significance. This accounts for the freedom that even pessimistic or tragic literary works suggest; this accounts for the attachment to form which means an ability to face imponderables with calm and with rhythmical adjustment or with a sense of humor. This explains the fate of those writers and poets who betray the decency of creativeness and degenerate into exiles of the spirit; it explains their incapacity to record the purity, courage and humility of vision and their unwillingness to recognize it in works whose authors did not allow self-interest and expediency to enslave the freedom of their integrity. These exiles of the spirit do not seem to know or do not wish to know that one cannot outsmart the spirit. Not even good writers, when they cease to be honest writers, can do that.

**THE AMERICAN POETRY JOURNAL**

**announces**

**A POETRY CONTEST**

in memory of the beloved poet of the people

**RALPH CHEYNEY**

A first prize of ten dollars will be awarded for the best poem on "A Poet's Peace," describing the kind of peace the poets of the United Nations desire.

Other prizes will be awarded and copies of Ralph Cheyney's **Touch and Go** will be given to poets winning honorable mentions.

Poems may be in any form but must not exceed 20 lines in length. No entries will be returned. Manuscripts must bear name and address of the author.

Contest closes at midnight on the anniversary of Ralph Cheyney's passing: Oct. 15, 1943.

The winning poems will appear in **The American Poetry Journal.**

**JUDGES:**

**Margaret Widdemer** **Art Young**
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# Voices of Latin America*

## III—Germán Arciniegas: Colombian Author

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In the autumn of 1942, Germán Arciniegas, author and recently Minister of Public Education of the Republic of Colombia, came to the United States to teach at Columbia University and other educational institutions. Born in December, 1900, in Bogotá, the capital, he is still a comparatively young man. Before being made head of public education under former President Eduardo Santos, he was consul of Colombia in Buenos Aires. He has also held the same position in London. As a teacher, he has taught sociology in universities of his country. For a number of years, journalism has occupied his attention also; he is editor of the monthly periodical, *Revista de las Indias,* published in Bogotá.

Ricardo Riaño Jaume of Havana, Cuba, an editor of the literary review, *Sintesis,* writes that Arciniegas is among the greatest prose writers of Colombia. The following three books, among others, have been written by the Colombian. *Jiménez de Quesada* is an account of the Spanish conquistador of what is now Colombia. It has been translated into English by Mildred Adams, and is entitled, *The Knight of El Dorado,* and the long subtitle states the theme, *The Tale of Don Gonzalo Jiménez de Quesada and His Conquest of New Granada, Now Called Colombia.* It was in 1538 that Quesada conquered the Chibcha Indians and founded Bogotá near the old Indian capital. The captured territories were named New Granada. Another book by Arciniegas tells of the role of the Germans in the conquest of America, *Los Alemanes en la Conquista de America.* A third volume, *Los Comuneros,* is concerned with a popular revolt in New Granada in the years 1779-1782 against harsh Spanish rule, the people having been burdened by heavy taxation. The revolt, however, was not successful. But the war of independence in 1810-1819 resulted in the overthrow of the Spanish government. It was not until about three hundred years after the conquest by Quesada, that is, in 1832, that Colombia, then named the Republic of New Granada, was founded with a constitution and a president.

Some of the main convictions of Arciniegas that follow are from his sociological and historical book, *America, Tierra Firma,* as well as from his other writings. It is important in sociological study, according to him, to recognize the principle of relativity. Holding to the doctrine of fixed, absolute forms of such social organizations as the family and the state prevents one from seeing their diversity and makes for intolerance. We need to consider not "the family" but rather "families" as they existed, for example, in ancient times, and as they exist in Indian America, in Spanish America, and in the United States. The term should include the most diverse manifestations. It is likewise with the state; what really exists are states. If we attempt to reduce all kinds of states to "the state" we have a vague abstraction that stands for even contradictory types. But such strong prejudices often center around some one particular form of organization that impartial study of diverse families and states and societies is difficult.

Let us consider now a few of Arciniegas' ideas about America before its conquest and afterward. Interesting are the comparisons and contrasts he makes between three important Indian peoples of North and South America. The Aztec civilization in Mexico is characterized by him as having been Roman in type of organization. The three important centers were the temple, the palace, and the market, representing, respectively, religion, government, and commerce. Militarism and slavery were among its chief features. But the Inca civilization in Peru was communistic and agrarian. The state owned the lands and the main industries. Money was not used. The military rather than the commercial class dominated. The Chibchas in Colombia, however, had a political system having some of the characteristics of both the Aztecs and the Incas. Like the Aztecs, commercial enterprises existed and money was used as a medium of exchange. But the distribution of land was similar to that of the Incas. Thus as Arciniegas shows, different kinds of Indian civilizations existed for centuries before the conquest of America.

With regard to the conquest, the Colombian author raises an interesting question when he asks whether the conquistadores really discovered America. His answer is, "No." According to him, America was not genuinely discovered at the end of the fifteenth and the first part of the sixteenth century. The conquistadores and others from the old world came to impose their economic system, religious dogma, architecture, and race. Their aim was not so much to *discover* as to *cover* native American civilization. Arciniegas writes, "But that which the European came to cover in America was 'not an elemental, incipient culture. That which he destroyed with his horses, his gun-powder, his conquistadores, and his monks was not inferior to that of Spain." Real discovery is not made by force of arms, he says, but by the spirit of love. It means entering inwardly into the soul of a people. Thus conquest and discovery are radically opposed.

With reference to the present, is the whole of America really a continent? Arciniegas thinks it is not. He distinguishes between mere geographical unity and spiritual or cultural unity. In the latter sense of community of ideas, culture, and understanding, America is not yet a continent, but we need to labor to make it one. Persons, for example, in a South American country often feel closer to Europe than to a neighboring country. Furthermore, he points out that differences exist not only between North and South America, but also between eastern America which faces Europe, and the western part which has "turned toward itself." To create continental unity, more is needed than governmental diplomacy and coöperation. Increasing commercial links between the countries are a help. Already, he thinks, there is an aspiration for democracy and liberty among the peoples of the continent, which affords a basis for unity. Above all, the peoples themselves in the various countries must learn to know and to appreciate their neighbors.

Arciniegas has faith in the future of the American continent. He writes, "America is self-sufficient, but at a twentieth century level and its standard of living is higher every day." Referring to South America, he believes a "world of infinite possibilities is reaching

*The third of a series of articles on Latin-American leaders appearing from time to time in the columns of UNITY.

maturity." In these times of a war-torn Europe which it is hoped will be eventually reconstructed, we in the United States can gain courage and hope by sharing the conviction of such thinkers as Germán Arciniegas that great possibilities for material and cultural advance open before us in America—in all America.

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# The Study Table

### Eve Curie's Travels

JOURNEY AMONG WARRIORS. *By Eve Curie. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. $3.50.*

Miss Curie's book is a kind of extended and elaborated version of Wendell Willkie's *One World*. She followed the same route as her distinguished fellow-traveler, she saw and talked with many of the same people, she brings back report of the same situations and problems. There is much the same reaction in these two observers on their altogether remarkable experiences—and there is one conspicuous and significant difference! Wendell Willkie's main interest was in the world after the war—the peace that must follow and hold the world together. The war was primarily of concern to him as a means to this great end of reconciliation and reconstruction. Miss Curie, *per contra,* had her attention riveted on the war itself. She saw everything in terms of fighting and winning the fight. If she thought of the future at all, it was only in prospect of the liberation of her beloved country, France, from bondage. If only the Nazis can be defeated and destroyed, then any kind of peace will suit her. Which means that Miss Curie is not a statesman, but an ardent patriot, a particularly gallant and sensitive woman who has suffered much! Whereas Mr. Willkie's book is a document of first class importance for the world of the future, Miss Curie's volume is a work of first class interest and importance only for the world that now is.

As a reporter, Eve Curie must take high rank. I have not read all, or even most, of the multitude of war books produced by the correspondents and travelers of our day. They disappear almost as fast as they appear, since they are prevailingly the feverish exploitations of personal adventure or the deliberate promotion of the war effort in sheer propaganda style. The real accounts of this great conflict must come later. But this book shares much of this later and more permanent quality of history, along with the immediate values of the day's report. Her story, just for its own sake, has absorbing value, for Miss Curie is herself a fascinating person, a woman of dauntless courage and endurance who was ready for any kind of an experience in her journey, and also a writer of exceptional vividness and power. But the real importance of her book lies in its record of the war front in North Africa, Russia, and the Far East at that critical moment when the tide was turning in favor of the United Nations. Miss Curie was on the spot when defeat had reached its lowest ebb, and victory at last lay gleaming on before. The light was already breaking in Russia—the darkness of night's blackest hour still enshrouded Burma and China. It was a tremendous moment, and Miss Curie caught, and in her book transmits, the full impact of its meaning. Her account of what she saw has depth as well as range, understanding as well as excitement. She has produced a work which will be remembered and long consulted as an authentic historical document.

The best part of the volume, it seems to me, is the report of the author's weeks in Russia. What Miss Curie did—in getting to the front, for example—was remarkable. What she saw had quite extraordinary significance. What she writes has a thrill and wonder which moves the heart. Nowhere else have we read an account of the Soviets at war which compares with this. There is an epic grandeur about it, as well as a factual accuracy, which constitutes a notable page of history.

The least satisfactory portion of the book, again it seems to me, is the chapters on India. Here Miss Curie was frankly confused, and she conveys her confusion to the reader. She saw and talked with Nehru, and recognized him instantly as one of the world's great men. She had an interview with Gandhi, and felt at once the charm and ineffable sanctity of his personality, but only skimmed the surface of his thought. Never once did she penetrate to the deep sources of his power. She was instinctively sympathetic with the Indians in their demand for liberty—she would have been faithless otherwise to her Polish and French ancestry! But she was more passionately concerned with getting on with the war, and felt the Indian movement for independence an intrusion upon and interference with the war. She wanted postponement, oblivious to the fact that postponement, on one pretext or another, has for a hundred years been the order of the day in India. She was quite blind also to the fact that only a free India can effectively bear her part in a war for a free world. Hence the confusion of which I speak! Miss Curie would have done better had she not gone to India.

The report of China ranks with that of Russia rather than that of India. It is superbly done—a fitting companion-piece to Mr. Willkie's magnificent report. Other chapters rank equally high. Miss Curie in this work has added inches to the high stature attained by her in her unforgettable biography of her mother. I commend this book to all who would keep abreast of the best literature of our time.

JOHN HAYNES HOLMES.

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### The Spirit That Will Bring Back Freedom

THE FIGHT OF THE NORWEGIAN CHURCH AGAINST NAZISM. *By Bjarne Höye and Trygve M. Ager. New York: The Macmillan Company. 180 pp. $1.75.*

This volume is an inspiring commentary on Paul's famous words, "our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness." The book tells the story of the heroic struggle that the Norwegian Lutheran Church is waging against the Nazis and their Quislings ever since 1940, when they tried to break the will of

the Norwegian people politically and nationally and to bend the influential state church of Norway to the will and purpose of the conquerors. When the whole story of this world war has been written, one of the most dramatic chapters will be devoted to the gallant stand that these sturdy Norwegian Lutherans made against the Nazi intruder.

It may be suggested that the story of Norwegian church resistance to Hitler lacked the glamour of such personalities as that of a Niemoeller in Germany; but this writer believes that Bishop Eivind Berggrav, Primate of the Norwegian Church, will rank with the greatest of the spiritual heroes of our day, and that his brave followers have written a chapter in religious history rivaling the record of any period of martyrdom and fortitude.

The authors state:

> The object was clear. By sowing doubt and disseminating falsehood about the leader [Bishop Berggrav] of the church, the Nazis hoped to create dissension and bewilderment within the church itself, and thus compromise it and render it incapable of offering any kind of effective resistance to the coming nazification and deprivation of its authority.

But again the Nazis had miscalculated. The Norwegian Church "mobilized," i.e., it organized and utilized its spiritual and moral resources; and notwithstanding the usual methods of treachery and terror, of persecution and discrimination used by the enemy, a "free church" emerged to operate bravely and purposefully in a defeated but unconquered land, demonstrating again that all of Nazism's chicanery and subtle deviltry are helpless when opposed by true patriotism and firm faith.

Chapter titles, such as "The Church—Fearless and Unshakable," "The Establishment of a 'Free' Church Confirmed," and "The Church Carries On," are indicative of the temper of religion in Norway and of the hope that religious men and women in and out of Norway have regarding the final outcome of this struggle.

The book is well-documented, and the appendix carries the famous Pastoral Letter of February, 1941, as well as other documents bearing eloquent witness to a spirit that will bring back freedom, political and religious, not only to Norway but to the whole world.

KARL M. CHWOROWSKY.

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### Modern Soul Saving

ON BEING A REAL PERSON. *By Harry Emerson Fosdick. New York: Harper and Brothers.* 295 *pp.* $2.50.

It is almost incredible, even for those who have heard of Doctor Fosdick during the entire span of their adult life, that this is his nineteenth book, and that the total sales of the previous eighteen have passed the million mark. When one considers that he began to teach homiletics at Union Seminary almost thirty years ago, that he inspired and saw to completion the great Riverside Church whose only minister he has been, and that for more than fifteen years he has been preaching over a national radio hookup, one sees in outline the chart of his total achievements.

This book is the product, not simply of the experiences of such a record but the added experience of twenty years of personal counselling which began before his ministry at Riverside Church was even thought of. One approaches such a book with great respect, and it should be said at the outset that this is one of the two or three best books he has written.

Doctor Fosdick considers here the personal problems with which the thousands of people who have consulted him have been afflicted. When, at the old First Presbyterian Church, on Fifth Avenue, he first announced his desire to discuss such matters, the response was so overwhelming that he sought the help of a psychiatrist. He has sought such help ever since; and it is obvious as one reads these pages that it is Fosdick's practical good sense, aided and abetted by medicine and psychiatry, more than by his theology, which is drawn on here, to help people in their distress.

It is *people* who interest Doctor Fosdick, and as he has phrased it, "people, one by one." One need not be unfair to say that individual men and women rather than national or social problems have interested him. As a pacifist he has long been influential in war resistance, and he has been socially-minded and internationally-minded; but one does not readily identify his name with the great social questions of our time. His sermons through the years that are fixed in people's minds are those that concern themselves with, "The Power to See it Through," "The Secret of Victorious Living," "Successful Christian Living," "Living Under Tension." The present book is a fitting sequel, and might be said to gather into final form all that the author had previously written and preached on the general subject of personal problem solving.

The chapter headings, therefore, are almost self-explanatory for any reader who is familiar with Fosdick's method: "The Principle of Self-Acceptance," "Getting Oneself Off One's Hands," "Using All There Is in Us," "Mastering Personal Depression," "Shouldering Responsibility for Ourselves." The concluding chapters, "The Principle of Released Power," and the "Practical Use of Faith," summarize Fosdick's philosophy of personal integration, and the theistic view of life which he holds essential to it. Quoting Joseph Wood Krutch, who once said that "ours is a lost cause and there is no place for us in the natural universe," Fosdick goes on to comment that "when any man's feeling about life and his thought concerning it have come to this conclusion, he faces distraction at the very center of his philosophy. . . . A deep fissure splits such a life in two."

One can agree with this entire statement and yet disagree with the thought that is obviously in Fosdick's mind. It is certainly true that many people, having been jolted out of the traditional assurance of a personal God, become lost souls and split personalities. But reintegration may very well come not simply in one way, but in either of two ways: (1) The soul may "return to God," to a theistic position, that is, or (2) the person may reinterpret the cosmos in such a way as to substitute in a completely satisfying manner an impersonal process for a personal God. This need not at all be the equivalent of Krutch's so-called "lost cause," for there are values even in an impersonally conceived universe. Indeed, Fosdick's repeated references to Joseph Wood Krutch, ever since the latter in a somewhat sour mood wrote his "Modern Temper," suggest his failure to see or to admit a distinction which in the humanistic or naturalistic approach to the cosmos has long since been made.

With this one reservation, and it is offered reluctantly, the book deserves the highest commendation. There is nowhere a minister who will not find it helpful and stimulating as he seeks personal reinforcement in helping those who seek his help.

EDWIN T. BUEHRER.